

Literary and Historical Notes for Monday, July 16, 2007

On this day in 1915, **HENRY JAMES BECAME A BRITISH CITIZEN TO DRAMATIZE HIS COMMITMENT TO ENGLAND DURING WORLD WAR I.** He lived for long periods of time in both England and America, and said: "I aspire to write in such a way that it would be impossible to an outsider to say whether I am at a given moment an American writing about England or an Englishman writing about America."

It's the birthday of Norwegian writer **DAG SOLSTAD**, born in Norway in 1941. He has written novels, short stories, and dramas, including *Spirals* (1965), *Novel 1987* (1987), and *Professor Andersen's Night* (1996). He writes about intellectuals who feel out of place in today's culture.

On this day in 1951, **J.D. SALINGER'S THE CATCHER IN THE RYE WAS PUBLISHED.** Salinger worked on it over a period of ten years, in between writing stories for magazines like *The New Yorker*. At one point, he had a 90-page version of the novel accepted for publication, but he thought it wasn't good enough and continued to revise and add bits and pieces.

*The Catcher in the Rye* is about a sixteen-year-old troublemaker named Holden Caulfield, who runs away from Pencey Prep School a few days before Christmas Break. He wants to head west to California, and live a quiet life in a log cabin, away from all the "phonies." At one point, Holden says, "I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around — nobody big, I mean — except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff-I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all."

*The Catcher in the Rye* received bad reviews when it was first released. A *New York Times* critic parodied the style of Holden Caulfield in his review, writing, "This Salinger, he's a short-story guy. And he knows how to write about kids. [But] he should have cut out a lot about all these jerks and all that crumby school. They depress me. They really do." Thirty years after its publication, *The Catcher in the Rye* was both the most banned book in America and the second most frequently taught book in public schools. The book has sold over sixty million copies around the world.

It's the birthday of the novelist **ANITA BROOKNER**, born in London, England (1928). She began writing fiction in the 1980s, and her most famous novel, *Hotel du Lac* (1984), won the Booker Prize.

It's the birthday of **MARY BAKER EDDY**, born in Bow, New Hampshire (1821). She's the founder of the religion Christian Science, whose members believe that the mind is the sole reality and illnesses can be cured purely through mental effort.

**As Kingfishers Catch Fire**

by Gerard Manley Hopkins

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells,  
each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves—goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,  
Crying What I do is me: for that I came.

I say more: the just man justices;  
Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—  
Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

"As Kingfishers Catch Fire," by Gerard Manley Hopkins.  
Public domain.

**INSIDE PASSAGES** by Holly Harden

Well, it's been a fine time so far and things keep getting finer. Especially yesterday when, once again, I woke up long before the wake up call. Something seemed different, and I lay there a while contemplating what it might be. Had I forgotten something? Was I supposed to be somewhere? I sat up and drew the curtain back and there it was. Fjord Central. We'd entered the fjords and I felt it before I saw it and what a mighty thing.

If you made it out to the deck in that early morning light, you might have felt a kind of awe, the smallness of you in the shadow of those great rocks rising up out of the fjord waters. You might have gasped, or wept. Perhaps you hummed "Nearer My God to Thee." Or maybe you kept silent, and just let yourself feel grateful to be here.

Yup, grateful. I'll dare say this is my word for this trip thus far. Sure, there's a bit of stress now and then, and "tired" is right up there, and "happy" applies. But I haven't felt this consistently grateful for such a variety of things since Lord knows when. Feels like Thanksgiving three times a day, pie included.

I'm grateful for signs that tell you what the food is, and lifeboats, and maps. For those elevator mats with the day of the week on them (the editors of this publication are still on Minnesota time). For people who make music, make muffins, or make people laugh. I'm grateful for clean towels and

hymnals, for green apples and good pens. And how 'bout seasickness pills and earplugs, and toilets that flush.

Lately, I'm appreciating conversations with strangers who soon become

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...FOR THOSE  
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friends, and the stories they tell. The possibility of trolls and the chance of a whale; hot coffee and salt spray and workers behind the scenes. I'm grateful for

the break from groceries and laundry (well, almost) and lawn work and my kids. That someone had a notion one day to carve pelicans and roses into watermelon rind.

Yeah, I know. I could go on all day. But Ålesund awaits. And if not Ålesund, then something. For which you might find yourself grateful. Or simply full, if you're headed to the Lido Deck. Where there are windows. Lots of 'em, thank goodness.

*Holly Harden is a writer from Minnesota who is leading a workshop during the cruise. She once consumed an industrial-sized container of mustard in a month.*



**3-D Photo Fun:** Stare into the distance. Continuing this gaze, hold the paper three inches in front of your face and look at the dots. You should see four dots. Pull the image away slowly until the middle two dots merge. Now look at the glacier image from our cruise to Alaska last year. It should be in 3-D! Still have questions? Ask a shipmate who attended Fred Newman's 3-D photo workshop.

## FIELD NOTES

### Life in the Shade

by Rick Strimbeck

Wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella* in Latin, *gjøksyre* in Norwegian) is a common forest wildflower in both northern Europe and northeastern North America. Its three-parted leaves are reminiscent of clover, except that each leaflet is heart-shaped. The leaves and the white, pink-streaked flowers contain small amounts of oxalic acid, making them a tangy and attractive addition to a salad. Wood sorrel is well adapted to life in deep shade. The lens-shaped leaf's epidermal cells focus light into thousands of spots in the leaf interior so that it can be used more efficiently in photosynthesis, and the pale underside of the leaf reflects light back up to give it a second chance to be absorbed by the chlorophyll in the leaf. These adaptations also make the plant vulnerable to too much light – if the light energy absorbed by chlorophyll isn't used immediately in photosynthesis, it can drive other, destructive chemical reactions in the leaf cells. But the plant is ready for this, too. If a spot of sun leaks through the forest canopy and strikes a patch of wood sorrel,

within a few minutes the leaves bend downward, folding neatly on the midrib between the two lobes of the heart, so that they are no longer exposed to direct light. When they pass back into shade, the leaves move back into a horizontal position and get back to work. ❁

### Diamonds Discovered in Norway!

by J. Dykstra Eusden

Very small diamonds have been discovered in the Western Gneiss Region of Norway on Fjortoft Island in a rock that came from the Earth's mantle but is now exposed at the surface. The diamonds formed when plate collisions pushed rocks to depths of 120 kilometers below the surface during the Caledonian mountain building events back in the Paleozoic (420-380 million years ago). Graphite turns to diamond at those depths and the diamonds were found encased within strong garnet crystals. Protected by the garnet as they rose, the diamonds did not revert back to graphite, the stable form of carbon at the Earth's surface. The metamorphism that created these diamonds has been termed "UHP" for ultra high pressure metamorphism

where geologically extreme conditions of pressure existed in plate tectonic collision zones involving the consumption of dense ocean crust beneath a continent.

Determining a mechanism for the geologically rapid rise of the diamond-bearing rocks over about 10-5 million years of time has been a challenge to geologists. One hypothesis is that right after the Caledonian mountains reached their highest elevations in the Devonian, they collapsed under their own mass. As the mountaintops slid away on faults during the collapse, the base of the mountains (and the diamond-bearing rocks) rose up to compensate and eventually reached the surface. This would be similar to chopping the top off of an iceberg and watching the base of the iceberg rise up as the weight is removed. Though, so far, none of these diamonds are jewelry quality, their discovery does open the door to future exploration of diamonds in a new and different geologic environment. ❁

*We've taken to calling the APHC naturalists "The Rock Stars" 'cuz their turn-outs are so good. Check them out and see what 100 people are willing to wake up at 5:30 in the morning to see. Check HAL schedule for times and locations.*

## PASSENGER NOTES

Dear Garrison — Did you notice the Duct Tape X on the bottom of Life Raft #8? —*Anonymous*

We heard from 3 adult sisters that their mother was treating all of them to the cruise. We later met their mom, on her own, and said, "You are the generous mother!" Her reply: "One of these days they will be deciding what home to put me in." —*Anonymous*

My great grandfather, Andrew Paulson, left Norway for the promised land, the Dakotas, in 1882. He left behind his beloved fiancée, Hannah. They were from different social groups and he feared never seeing her again.

Great-grandfather Andrew worked for six years to earn passage for Hannah and for parent permission for them to be married.

During these six years, he sent letters to her. When she left to marry him, she put the letters in her trunk and brought them along.

My mother ended up with these letters, on thin paper, written in very delicate, perfect Norwegian script. They defied translation so we could only wonder what news of South Dakota in 1882-1886 would be there.

Finally in 1995 translation was done. Surprisingly, these were love letters. The words were as romantic as a tough Norwegian farmer could get. "My dear friend Hannah." "I fear I will never be with you again." "I may have to marry another, my dear Hannah." He became very depressed as time went by.

The letters stopped abruptly when she began her long journey to South Dakota in

the company of a trusted family member. We treasure them today and they will become part of the collection with the Minnehaha County Historical Society in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. — *Karen Moen*

As the daughter, granddaughter, great-granddaughter, niece, and cousin of 7 Methodist preachers, 1 missionary, and a grandmother whose favorite hymn was "Be strong! We are not here to dream or to drift", Methodism is in my blood.

But I am also drawn to the Unitarians who encourage dreaming and drifting. Everybody included. Nobody left behind. Find your rapture now — here on earth. Shut down the church in summer. God needs a vacation, too.

In summer I hang out with the Methodists. Love their straight-arrow dependability.

## VIKING NEWS

by Christina von Nolcken

### ADVICE FROM THE VIKINGS, PART 3

#### SONG

Presumably the Vikings sang as they rowed their longships, and at other times too. But according to our literary sources, poetry was mainly for preserving a person's reputation after his death. These three verses, again taken from Hávamál (tr. Henry Adams Bellows), and supposedly spoken by Odin, succinctly express this point. Unfortunately, the third is almost unreadable in the late thirteenth-century manuscript:

Cattle die, and kinsmen die,  
And so one dies one's self;  
But a noble name will never die,  
If good renown one gets.

Cattle die, and kinsmen die,  
And so one dies one's self;  
One thing I know that never dies,  
The fame of a dead man's deeds.

Certain is that which is sought from runes,  
That the gods so great have made,  
And the Master-Poet himself painted . . .

*Christina von Nolcken is the PHC Norway Cruise Viking expert. She's collected an anthology of Viking texts now available for overnight lending at the Information Desk in the lobby.*

Passing the cup (grape juice) and breaking bread together as we "hunger and thirst after righteousness." In winter, I take my missionary zeal to the Unitarians – serving on committees, organizing volunteers for rummage sales and chicken pie suppers – not easy tasks when many are "dabbling" with religion.

My own theology has returned to that of my childhood. No more Apostles' Creed. God is love. (Or love is god.) Be kind. Be grateful. Take care of the sick and poor and the lame. The peacemakers will inherit the earth. "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam." — *Ann Dwyer*

*Got Notes? Drop 'em at the HAL front desk — 4:00 p.m., no later. Please.*



## THE BOOK NOOK

by Marcia Pankake

### What Our Grandparents Knew

#### Norway

written by A. F. Mockler-Ferryman  
2nd ed. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1947.

Originally from 1909, this old-fashioned book by an Englishman gives us history, geography, and society rather than hotels, restaurants, and shopping. Concise throughout, he covers the Vikings in three-and-a-half pages, and Ibsen in one paragraph. Much of what the author describes still pertains, for Bergen is a lovely spot surrounded by an amphitheater of mountains rising up around the city. Norway now, however, is one of Europe's richest countries. Although Norwegians still largely value equality of income, few of them make a living as woodsmen with axes cutting timber for export or occupy themselves in winter cutting ice. Nevertheless, here's an instructive and enjoyable two-hour read.

*Marcia Pankake is a retired librarian and long time editor of Prairie Home publications. The first book club meeting was a great success. The next one is on immigration.*

## THINGS OVERHEARD

**"That bread pudding is phenomenal. I can die now."**

—at a dining table on the Lido Deck

**"...and he likes to dance. Can you believe it? I mean, he seems perfect. But he's got to be screwed up somehow."**

—one woman to another in the Ocean Bar

**"Oh...I think I'm going to be speechless for a while."**

— on the Sports Deck upon entering fjord #1

**"Oh, I can still party. But if it goes on all week you're going to have a couple of octogenarians passed out."**

— overheard in the elevator

**"Whoops. We just missed Vik."**

—after looking up from a computer



### CAN'T GET ENOUGH?

Take some home.

### WE HAVE CDs, BOOKS AND DVDS FOR SALE.

Quantities are limited.

## You Really Ought to Know

There's still room for a few people in John's classes on Wednesday and Sunday if scotch tasting piques your interest.

And if you've changed your mind about journal writing with Holly, let us know. There are still people waiting to hear if there's room.



## APHC Camera Club

### Calling all shutterbugs!

Drop off your digital photo cards to the APHC Info desk in the lobby before 4:30 p.m. each day and we just might add them to a slide show. Digital images only, please, in RAW or JPG formats.

**Card Formats Supported:** Compact-Flash, Memory Stick, Memory Stick Duo, Memory Stick PRO, Memory Stick PRO Duo, SmartMedia, MMC, SDHC Card, miniSD Card, SD Card, xD-Picture Card.